

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBJECT Shortages in Chemicals

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50X1-HUM

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1. Yugoslavia, which has been Czechoslovakia's most important source of pyrites, reduced its deliveries of the ore towards the end of 1948 and stopped them completely in March 1949. This put the Czech chemical industry in a very precarious position, since it had only a two weeks' supply of pyrites on hand.

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4. In order to fill deliveries of sulphuric acid for Poland, the chemical industry has been compelled to process pure sulphur, and this has exhausted all of its reserves of sulphur.

5. The shortage of soot became so acute last year that the chemical industry was forced to burn its stock of naphthalene in order to produce soot.

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6. Deliveries of phosphates from Africa and South America have ceased, probably as a result of Russian pressure. In lieu of these phosphates, the USSR is furnishing Czechoslovakia with phosphates from the Kola peninsula; at the same time it gives technical advice on their use. These phosphates do not decompose readily and must be heated and treated under pressure. Moreover, they often arrive in crude form—they are not sorted out and are full of gravel and earth.

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7. There is a shortage of organic products which are required in the production of dyes having a tar basis.
8. There is also a shortage of organic dissolvents, such as methane, formaldehyde, acetone, and anhydride, and of other miscellaneous items required for improving finished goods. This is especially true in the production of dyes, the treatment of leather, the rubber industry, and the electrical industry.

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